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ABSTRACT

Most people know much more than they can communicate because their personal knowledge is so thoroughly grounded in experience that it cannot be expressed in its fullness. This study examines how two superintendents used tacit knowledge to build shattered trust in their school boards. Trust is first examined as a multifaceted aspect of human conduct. It is a complex construct in which willingness to risk vulnerability, confidence, benevolence, reliability, competence, honesty, and openness play significant roles. Tacit knowledge is then considered as a manifestation of practical intelligence, encompassing interpersonal and intrapersonal skills, and insight into goal achievement. The two superintendents were interviewed, and the resulting information was coded for subsequent statistical analysis. Results show that the superintendents' tacit knowledge, based on prior experience in the superintendency, played a significant role in developing trust with their respective school boards. This study suggests that further research should be done on tacit knowledge to shed light on learned behaviors, allowing a goal-oriented consideration of why and how trust develops or disintegrates. Knowledge obtained from such research can help determine whether trust in the superintendent and superintendency has a positive effect on school district and school community effectiveness. (Contains 51 references.) (RT)

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Tacit Knowledge in Trust Development: First Year Efforts of Two Newly-Hired Superintendents

Presented at the Annual Conference of the University Council for Educational Administration November, 2001, Cincinnati, Ohio

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Trust is seen as a vital element in well functioning organizations. It is the "mortar that binds leader to follower" and forms the basis for leaders' legitimacy (Nanus, 1989, p. 101). This study breaks new ground by considering trust development in the superintendency from a tacit knowledge perspective. The participating superintendents recently assumed leadership of districts mired in low levels of superintendent trust. These experienced superintendents faced a difficult task as they sought to rebuild trust. Each addressed the task in part by drawing on the tacit knowledge garnered from their individual experiences in educational leadership roles. What types of informal, tacit knowledge did these individuals rely on? What new knowledge were they generating from the current circumstances?

Theoretical Framework

Trust

Trust has been described as "a remarkably effective lubricant" that reduces the complexities of organizational life and facilitates transactions far more quickly and economically than other means of managing (Powell, 1990). Engendering distrust can be costly. As trust declines, the cost of doing business increases because people must engage in self-protective actions. They become "increasingly unwilling to take risks, demand greater protections against the possibility of betrayal, and increasingly insist on costly sanctioning mechanisms to defend their interests" (Tyler & Kramer, 1996, p.3-4). Trust is an expectancy held by an individual that

the behavior of another person or group will be altruistic and personally beneficial. An individual is more likely to trust another if he believes the person had nothing to gain from untrustworthy behavior; if he perceives that he is able to exert some control over the other person's outcome; and if there is a degree of confidence in the altruism of the trusted person (Frost et al., 1978). Baier (1986) added several new dimensions, defining trust as the reliance on others' competence and willingness to look after, rather than harm, things one cares about and values that are entrusted to their care. What we care about may be tangible (e.g. our children, our money) or intangible (e.g. democratic ideals, norms of respect and tolerance). Schools and school leaders look after these things for our society, making the issue of trust vital in studying school leadership.

Trust is dynamic, taking on different characteristics at different stages in a relationship. Lewicki and Bunker (1996) described three levels. At the start of the relationship, the trust is provisional, resting on the assumption that the other party desires to maintain the relationship and that a breech of expectations will result in severing the tie. Knowledge-based trust occurs as actors get to know one another and feel able to predict how each is likely to behave in given circumstances. Communication and courtship are key processes in development of this trust level. As the relationship matures, the possibility for deep identification emerges. Identity-based trust exists when each party understands and appreciates the other's desires to such an extent that each can effectively act for the other.

Within organizations, rules and regulations are adopted to act as substitutes for interpersonal trust and to restore damaged trust (Shapiro, 1987). However, legalistic mechanisms are likely to be effective only when the task requirements are well understood, and may engender distrust and resentment in situations where workers need a certain level of discretion in order to

perform effectively (Fox, 1974). Bies and Tripp (1996) suggested that trust violations within organizations stem from two major sources: a damaged sense of civic order (e.g., violation of rules or norms, abuse of power) or a damaged identity (e.g., unfair criticism, public insults).

Hosmer (1995) observed the difficulty of defining trust: "There appears to be widespread agreement on the importance of trust in human conduct, but unfortunately there also appears to be an equally widespread lack of agreement on a suitable definition of the construct" (p. 380). Trust is a multi-faceted, complex construct, which may have different bases and degrees depending on context . From a philosophical perspective, trust has to do with ethically and morally justifiable behavior (Baier, 1986; Hosmer, 1995), but in economic terms trust is a rational calculation of costs and benefits (Coleman, 1990; Williamson, 1993). In individual terms, trust is conceived as the extent to which an individual is willing to rely upon and make oneself vulnerable to another (Rotter, 1967; Frost, Stimpson, & Maugham, 1978). In an organizational context, trust is often a collective judgment that another group will not act opportunistically, is honest in negotiations, and makes a good faith efforts to behave in accordance with commitments (Bradach and Eccles, 1989; Cummings & Bromily, 1996).

There are certain reoccurring themes that emerge regardless of the context of study, that is, whether philosophical, economic, organizational, or individual. Vulnerability is a general aspect of trust. A more complete comprehension of trust requires a depth of understanding of each facet. There is empirical evidence that all of these facets, as listed below, are important aspects of trust relations in schools. A factor analytic study (Hoy & Tschannen-Moran, 1999) demonstrated that the facets covary together and form a coherent construct of trust.

Willingness to Risk Vulnerability. A necessary condition of trust is interdependence, where the interests of one party cannot be achieved without reliance upon another (Rousseau, Sitkin, Burt, & Camerer, 1998). Where there is no interdependence, there is no need for trust. The degree of interdependence may alter the form trust takes. Interdependence brings with it vulnerability. Vulnerability in a matter of importance or value to the trusting person is assumed by most definitions of trust (Baier, 1986; Coleman, 1990; Deutsch, 1958; Mayer, Davis, Schoorman, 1995; Mishra, 1996; Zand,1971). The trustor is cognizant of the potential for betrayal and harm from the other (Granovetter, 1985; Kee & Knox, 1970; Lewis & Weigert, 1985) and uncertainty concerning whether the other intends to and will act appropriately is the source of risk (Rousseau, Sitkin, Burt, & Camerer). Risk is the perceived probability of loss, as interpreted by the decision maker (Coleman; Williamson, 1993). Trust, then, is a willingness to be vulnerable under conditions of risk and interdependence (Rousseau, Sitkin, Burt, & Camerer).

Confidence. One of the early puzzles concerning trust was whether it was an individual's behavior or attitude in a situation of vulnerability. For example, when a parent leaves his or her child with a childcare provider but with significant misgivings, can the parent be said to have trusted the provider? By taking action the parent has voluntarily increased his or her risk to negative outcomes; however, he or she has done so with a certain level of anxiety. Deutsch (1960) suggested that when a person makes a move that increases vulnerability to another, it is hard to infer the motivation for such a choice. The decision to place oneself at risk to another could be based on many factors including need, hope, conformity, impulsivity, innocence, virtue, faith, masochism, or confidence. Although the behavior of the parent who anxiously left the child with the caregiver was the same as that of a parent with no such misgivings, the level of trust is very different. There is growing consensus that trust lies in the degree of confidence one

holds in the face of risk rather than in the choice or action that increases one's risk (Rousseau, Sitkin, Burt, & Camerer, 1998). Confidence extends across a gap of time. Most interactions do not take place simultaneously but unfold over a matter of time. There is a lag between when a commitment is made and when the recipient knows that it has been fulfilled. The degree to which a person can rest in that uncertainty with a certain amount of confidence is the degree to which that person can be said to trust (Kee & Knox, 1970).

Benevolence. Perhaps the most common facet of trust is a sense of benevolence, the confidence that one's well-being, or something one cares about, will be protected and not harmed by the trusted party (Baier, 1986; Butler & Cantrell, 1984; Bradach & Eccles, 1989; Cummings & Bromily, 1996; Deutsch, 1958; Frost, Stimpson, & Maughan, 1978; Gambetta, 1988; Hosmer, 1995; Hoy & Kupersmith, 1985; Hoy & Tschannen-Moran, 1999; Mishra, 1996; Zand, 1971). Trust is the assurance that the other will not exploit one's vulnerability or take excessive advantage of one even when the opportunity is available (Cummings & Bromily, p. 4). One can count on the good will of another to act in one's best interest. In an ongoing relationship the future actions or deeds may not be specified but only that there will be a mutual attitude of good will. It is the "accepted vulnerability to another's possible but not expected ill will" (Baier, p. 236). In situations of interdependence this faith in the altruism of the other is particularly important.

Reliability. At its most basic level, trust has to do with predictability, that is, consistency of behavior and knowing what to expect from others (Butler & Cantrell, 1984; Hosmer, 1995). In and of itself, however, predictability is unsatisfying as a definition of trust. We can trust a person to be invariably late. Or we can count on someone to be consistently malicious, self-serving, or dishonest. When our well-being is diminished or damaged in a predictable way, our expectations

may be met but the sense in which we trust the other person or group is weak. Reliability, or dependability, combines a sense of predictability with benevolence. In a situation of interdependence, when something is required from another person or group, the individual can be counted on to supply it (Butler & Cantrell; Mishra, 1996; Rotter, 1967). There is a sense of confidence that one's needs will be met. One need not invest energy worrying whether the person will come through or making mental provisions in case he or she does not.

Competence. There are times when good intentions are not enough. When a person is dependent on another but some level of skill is involved in fulfilling an expectation, then a person who means well may nonetheless not be trusted (Baier, 1986; Butler & Cantrell, 1984; Mishra, 1996). For example, the patient of a young surgeon may feel that the doctor wishes very much to heal her, but if the doctor's success record has not been good, the patient may not feel a great deal of trust in the physician. Many of the situations in which we speak about trust in an organizational context have to do with competence. In a work context, if a person's or team's project depends on others, they may or may not feel an "assured confidence" that the deadlines will be met or that the products will be of adequate quality to complete the project.

Honesty. Honesty speaks to the person's character, integrity, and authenticity. Rotter (1967) defined trust as "the expectancy that the word, promise, verbal or written statement of another individual or group can be relied upon" (p. 651). The implication is that statements made were truthful and conformed to "what really happened," at least from that person's perspective, and that commitments made about future actions would be kept. A correspondence between a person's statements and deeds characterizes integrity. An acceptance of responsibility for one's actions and avoiding distorting the truth in order to shift blame to another characterizes authenticity (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 1998). Many scholars and researchers see honesty as a

pivotal facet of trust (Baier, 1986; Butler & Cantrell, 1984; Cummings & Bromily, 1996; Hoy & Tschannen-Moran, 1999).

Openness. Openness is the extent to which relevant information is not withheld; it is a process by which people make themselves vulnerable to others by sharing information with others, a giving of oneself (Butler & Cantrell, 1984; Mishra, 1996). Such openness signals a kind of reciprocal trust, a confidence that neither the information nor the individual will be exploited, and recipients can feel the same confidence in return. People who are guarded in the information they share provoke suspicion; people wonder what is being hidden and why. Just as trust breeds trust, so too does distrust breed distrust. People who are unwilling to extend trust through openness end up living in isolated prisons of their own making (Kramer, Brewer, & Hanna, 1996).

Even if we have a common definition of trust, the reality of trust will not be the same in all times and in all places. The importance of each of the facets depends on the referent of trust (who is being trusted) and the nature of the interdependence between the parties. Each of us is differentially vulnerable to an intimate friend, a boss, an investment broker, or a surgeon. Among teachers and principals, all aspects of trust have been shown to carry significant importance (Hoy & Tschannen-Moran, 1999).

If we are to understand trust, it would be useful to explore what actions are required to establish trust. If organizations hope to garner the benefits of a trusting work environment, it is management's responsibility to initiate trusting relationships through trustworthy behavior on the part of managers (Whitener, Brodt, Korsgaard, & Werner, 1998). Swinth (1967) demonstrated that trust was established through a commitment period in which each partner had the opportunity to signal to the other a willingness to accept personal risk and not to exploit the

vulnerability of the other for personal gain. Whitener, et al., suggest five behaviors managers can engage in to cultivate trust: (1) consistency, (2) integrity, (3) concern, (4) communication, and (5) sharing control. These mirror the facets of trust discussed earlier.

As can be seen in the above discussion, trust has cumulative aspects, growing (or withering) from expectations and experiences and fluctuating with changing contexts. Trust, then, has some reliance on previously developed knowledge patterns. The development of these often implicitly held knowledge patterns leads us to a discussion of tacit knowledge.

Tacit Knowledge

Most people know much more they can communicate because their personal knowledge is so thoroughly grounded in experience that it cannot be expressed in its fullness (Horvath et al, 1999). Tacit knowledge is the term that has been used to refer to such personal knowledge; it is contextually-based, action-oriented knowledge acquired without the direct help of others that allows individuals to adapt, select, and shape their environments in ways that enable them to achieve their goals (Horvath et al, 1994). Bereiter and Scalamandria (1993) posit that tacit knowledge is the invisible knowledge hidden behind intelligent action.

Tacit knowledge is viewed as a manifestation of practical intelligence, encompassing interpersonal and intrapersonal skills and insight into goal-achievement. Practical intelligence has been called "common sense" (Sternberg, 1985) and "street smarts" (Horvath et al, 1994). The practical abilities are those used to navigate successfully through everyday life. They include interpersonal and supervisory skills, self knowledge, and insight into the activities that lead to goal achievement, including the ability to solve practical problems and to shape environments that impede success (Sternberg, 1985).

Horvath and his colleagues (1994) map three broad features of tacit knowledge. First, tacit knowledge is procedural in structure. It is related to action and is committed to particular uses. Second, tacit knowledge is relevant to goal attainment. And third, tacit knowledge is acquired with minimal help from others. It is usually unspoken, or poorly articulated, and not generally shared among individuals because the rules on which it is based often belong to complex groupings of highly abstract, automatized procedures. Knowing the "ins and outs" of an occupation or situation give a comparative advantage to the holder of that information (Sternberg, 1985). The basic idea underlying Sternberg's approach to practical intelligence is "that underlying successful performance in many real-world tasks is tacit knowledge of a kind never explicitly taught and in many instances never even verbalized..." (p. 269).

The key to practical intelligence is the acquisition and application of tacit knowledge to solve practical problems. While tacit knowledge increases with job experience, it is not a direct function of that experience. In other words, what matters is not how much experience an individual has, but what is done with that experience as regards the acquisition and application of tacit knowledge (Wagner, 1987).

Though sometimes bearing different names, the three areas found most commonly in the extant research on managerial tacit knowledge are interpersonal tacit knowledge, intrapersonal tacit knowledge, and organizational tacit knowledge. Interpersonal tacit knowledge exerts a consistent presence in the tacit knowledge literature (Ford, 1986; Klemp & McClelland, 1986; Horvath et al., 1994a; 1994b; Sternberg, 1985; Wagner & Sternberg, 1985, Williams, 1991). This knowledge includes influencing, controlling, and managing others; establishing trust; supporting, understanding, and cooperating with others; communicating with others; learning from others; and handling social relationships. Wagner and Sternberg (1985; Sternberg, 1985) are emphatic in

saying that interpersonal tacit knowledge is important to managerial success. In examining the tacit knowledge of superintendents, Nestor-Baker and Hoy (2001) found that superintendents focus extensively on the interpersonal aspects of educational management; of 21 tacit knowledge categories derived via cluster analysis, 11 were based all or in part on tacit knowledge concerning relationships with others.

In tandem with tacit knowledge related to interpersonal relationships, there is a clear strand in the tacit knowledge literature dealing with self-knowledge and self-regulation, often refered to as "intrapersonal" (Gardner, 1993; Sternberg, 1985; Wagner & Sternberg, 1985). This is supported by Nestor-Baker and Hoy (2001; Nestor-Baker, in press), who found strands of interpersonal knowledge woven through superintendent tacit knowledge categories. It is entwined with interpersonal tacit knowledge, illustrating the tightly woven contextual interplay of self and others discussed by Gardner (1993).

Wagner and Sternberg (1985; Sternberg, 1985) found that managing people--knowing how to work with and direct the work others; managing tasks—knowing how to manage and prioritize day-to day tasks; managing self—knowing how to maximize one's performance and productivity; and managing career—knowing how to establish and enhance one's reputation were tacit knowledge areas particularly important for managerial success. While those studies did not involve superintendents, the four domains are supported by Nestor-Baker and Hoy's (2001; Nestor-Baker, in press) look at superintendent tacit knowledge .

The literatures on trust and on tacit knowledge suggest overlap. The interpersonal nature of trust relationships, which grows from expectations and previous experience often relies on interpretations of goal states held by self and others implies a connection between dynamic, facilitative trust and implicit, experiential, goal oriented tacit knowledge. We know more than we

can say; we use what we know to develop or bestow trust as we work to achieve personal and organizational goals. Our informally generated tacit knowledge provides background and context for our conceptions of trust and for our actions within trust relationships, informing our understandings of building and sustaining trust.

How do experienced superintendents make use of their tacit knowledge to establish trust when they enter a new school district? What strategies do they engage in to rebuild trust where it has been damaged or destroyed by their predecessor? These are the questions that guide this research.

Method

Participants

This exploratory study is based on the experiences and understandings of two experienced superintendents. There are particular similarities between them. Both are male, middle-aged Caucasians, as are the vast majority of practicing superintendents in America. Both have numerous years experience in the superintendency. Both appear to have been well-regarded in prior superintendencies, according to anecdotal information received from the superintendents and from their associates. Neither superintendent has experience at the principal or assistant principal level, both having entered administration by moving from the classroom directly to central office positions. At the time they accepted the superintendencies involved in this study, both men were aware of low trust perceptions in the districts they agreed to lead. Because of prior experiences, both men believed they could build trust within their respective districts.

Though the districts led by these superintendents are in different areas of the country (one is in the Midwest, one in a mid-Atlantic state), there are similarities. Both are mid-wealth districts, ranging between 10,000 -15,000 students, and encompassing both urban and suburban

aspects and populations. The districts have student populations approximately two-thirds larger than the districts led previously by these two recently hired superintendents. Board members on the boards overseeing the districts are composed primarily of veteran elected members and open strife is not in evidence on either board.

Interviews

Individual interviews with the superintendents were conducted slightly more than halfway through the first year in their new superintendencies. The interview protocol was based on Flanagan's critical-incident technique (1954) and Dervin's Sense-Making technique (1983).

Critical incident technique (CIT) grew from studies conducted in the United States Air Force during World War II. It is a post hoc method used to identify factors involved in success or failure. Used extensively in business and industry, CIT asks respondents to recall specific situations and to identify elements within those situations considered critical to the success or failure of the occurrences. Its long history of use attests to its popularity and its reliability and validity have been confirmed (see, for example, Andersson & Nilsson, 1964).

The Sense-Making (SM) technique is designed to encourage respondents to consider thoughts about their behavior that may not be easily articulated, but that the respondents employ in making sense of certain happenings. Given that tacit knowledge is often difficult to articulate (Cooper & Sawaf, 1996; Horvath et al., 1994), such encouragement is helpful in this study. Like CIT, SM is bound to a particular context and a particular temporal occurrence. However, SM goes beyond CIT by drawing attention to the thought processes used by the individual in making sense of the situation and in drawing conclusions from the situation. "The Sense-making interviewer is mandated to ask interviewees not only what they think/feel/see/sense, but how that has changed over time and across space and how any changes relate to experiential conditions"

(Huesca & Dervin, 1996, p.12). The interview must be grounded in the interviewee's experiential history and in terms of the real and possible impacts of those experiences. Interviewees are asked such questions as, "What led you to that conclusion?" and "What impacts came from that conclusion?" and "Have you always thought this way?" The interview seeks to focus not only on the steps taken but also on the rationale constructed by the respondent in making sense of occurrences. It is in this reasoning that the development of tacit knowledge may reside.

Coding and Analysis

The interviews were coded and analyzed by the researchers, who sought evidence of tacit knowledge related to trust development. Such evidence should not be mistaken as strict representations of tacit knowledge. Rather, the comments of the superintendents and the information derived from those comments serve as markers, or pointers toward embedded tacit knowledge (Sternberg & Horvath, 1999). Neither should the comments and evidence be considered as "correct" tacit knowledge. Tacit knowledge is not necessarily good or right, nor is its application necessarily appropriate. It does, however, have the ability to impact the actions and goals of the holder of the knowledge.

Interviews were examined for examples of actions and understandings related to trust. Instances were pulled from the interviews and categorized according to the seven facets of trust defined by Hoy and Tschannen-Moran (1999). As referred to in earlier portions of this paper, those facets are willingness to risk vulnerabilty, confidence, benevolence, reliability, competence, openness, and honesty. Items within these facets were then examined in order to determine whether they were oriented toward interpersonal, intrapersonal, or organizational domains. Thus, the interview evidence, conceptual categorization, and repetition within

categories provide a platform for consideration of the tacit knowledge content utilized by the superintendents in their efforts to engender trust.

Results

Thirty-five examples of knowledge related to the superintendents' trust development efforts were culled from the interviews. One superintendent evinced 19 items, while 16 items surfaced in the other superintendent's comments. The examples are divided between those that address the superintendents' efforts to build trust and those that exhibit trust held by the superintendents and used in working with others in the organization (see Table I). It appears that the men exhibit an open attitude toward others, operating on the principle that trust is given until untrustworthiness is evidenced. As one superintendent said, " Everybody wants to do a good job, you just need to help them get there. They're going to be harder on themselves than you are." Perhaps it is not surprising that these men, who entered low trust situations believing they could improve trust relationships, provide evidence that they themselves hold trust of others.

Some items are listed in both categories, meaning that the item appears to point toward tacit knowledge that applies to both the development of trust and the holding of trust. For example, distancing the board from involvement in management is listed in both categories. The superintendent who indicated that knowledge suggested that prior micromanagement by the board had negatively impacted the superintendent's ability to build trust and acceptance within the school system. Therefore, he took steps to distance the board members from the daily operations of the schools, reducing the amount of time spent answering board member queries, having members work through the secretary to make appointments, using the board president as point person with the board. These behaviors by the superintendent shored up perceptions held by staff of the board/system relationship, improving the functioning of the superintendency and

possibly assisting in opening doors within the system for the development of trust. Thus, the item was placed in the "Superintendent Developing Trust" category.

The item was also placed in the "Superintendent Exhibiting Trust" category. The superintendent's discussion indicated that he trusted in the board members' willingness to let go of their prior behaviors. Early in his tenure, he asked members if they were willing to reduce their involvement. When they replied affirmatively, his resulting behavior exhibited trust in them and in their comments. This was an leap of faith on his part; after all, people may say one thing and believe another. If, after implementation of the management-reducing initiatives, his trust in the members was not upheld, the behaviors designed to develop trust internally could damage trust within the board/superintendent relationship.

Facets of Trust

Table I also shows agreement among the items culled from the interviews and the seven facets of trust developed by Hoy and Tschannen-Moran (1999). There is strong cohesion between the facets and the items surfaced in this study. It is important to note probable overlap between the categories due to the complexities of trust and the implicitness of tacit knowledge. Aspects of an item may place it squarely into a particular category, but slight changes in context could result in dual or different placement. In this study, items were assigned to categories based on the predominant context and discussion in the interview segment from which the item was drawn.

Nearly 23% of the items fall into the Openness category. This dovetails nicely with the finding that the superintendents trust others. Openness signals a kind of reciprocal trust, a confidence that neither the information nor the individual will be exploited, and that recipients can feel the same confidence in return. However, in low trust situations, openness does not occur

immediately. Both superintendents state that they followed predecessors who were not perceived as open. Both realized or came to realize that it takes some time for those perceptions to fade.

> ...my style is different than that of my predecessor. I think it has taken a while for people to work with me long enough to know that it *is* my style --- that it wasn't, that I wasn't being political --- think over a period of time --- people realized I am open and approachable and so I think that's one thing I discovered. At the same time, it's a much larger organization --- I have to make sure that as I hear from different individuals that come to me, I don't act too quickly so I don't create problems down the road.

As a category, Openness holds the largest number of items. However, Competence is not far behind with six items, or 17% of the items culled from the interviews. In this setting, competence would appear to be connected directly to the superintendents' ability to perform the job effectively. It is likely that a warm, open superintendent who does not have educational management skills would experience difficulties building competence-based trust. As was said in one of the interviews,

> People look for direction -- I think they expect that from the superintendent. I think they would feel frustrated if the superintendent sat back -- so they look for that --they expect some direction -- some idea of where we need to go.

One of the superintendents spoke of his efforts to balance his desire to be open with an organizational need for processes and procedures. In his words is a sense of the thought he has given and continues to give to this balancing act.

> I don't believe in hiding things. I believe in working very openly. At the same time, there has to be some organizational control. Trying to work on that balance right now --- we're trying to work that through --- there has to be a process.

Both also spoke of the need to help develop ownership in decisions and directions, as can be seen in these words.

> ...what I learned was too often I was ready to make a decision and then sell people after the fact...why we did it or whatever it was. Sometimes that doesn't provide the buy in necessary, so one of the things it taught me was that high quality decisions take time. We can't rush those decisions -- people need time to look at the possible solution. The thing

> of it is, I can tell them what it is, but until they discover it for themselves -- it won't be accepted.

The superintendents involved in this study speak with pride about their efforts to build technological capacity, student achievement, and organizational effectiveness. Given that each superintendent knew the purpose of the interview was to discuss trust development, it is interesting that both chose to spend significant time talking about areas directly connected to educational management skills.

The tacitness of the knowledge involved in competence is seen in the words of one superintendent. He was unable to articulate just what it is he does to assist people in developing organizational focus and in putting pieces together to form an organizational whole. With halting, thoughtful speech, he said,

> ...I guess -- I don't know -- through the years I've been able to take these aggregated pieces and put them together -- I don't know where that comes from, but it is a skill that I developed, acquired -- it's the way my mind works -- and I did the same thing when I worked in [a different executive-level] office. I took the various pieces [that were] operating independently and was able to pull groups together to focus -- so it's being able to aggregate it -- or whatever -- having them work together -- it's a skill -- not everybody can necessarily do that.

As a category, Willingness to Risk Vulnerability holds slightly more than 14% of the items. This category requires the superintendents to show facets of themselves that may not be expected by others but which are nonetheless welcomed. The items in this category go hand in hand with the Openness category, portraying superintendents who deliberately build trust by choosing to give others power in decision making and who choose to seek ways to increase the stature of others while decreasing certain formalized perceptions of the superintendent. Whether dressing as Santa Claus for administrators, being photgraphed at the top of the climbing wall at a middle school, playing with children on the playground or creating ways to be involved in

informal social activities with parents and employees, the superintendents looked for ways to increase points of connection between themselves and others.

The facets entitled Confidence, Reliability, and Honesty each contained four items, or slightly more than 11% per category, representing a combined total of 33% of the items. There are strong beliefs and understandings operating here. There is a marked attention to the details of employee needs, whether professional or personal. There is clear delineation of the importance of building individual and organizational capacity through development of personnel. There is a clear understanding that development of ideas and initiatives requires concrete support from those who have the ability to provide or deny resources. And running through each of those understandings is an overriding insistence on using behavioral and attitudinal consistency to develop trust in others. The words of the superintendents say it best.

> …some people don't spill everything out there. It's like a social process. People start informally -- maybe it's the little things that I can help the people with. Probably on the personal level, we have, a lot of our administrators have families and other personal responsibilities. And so you try to meet their personal issues, or family issues. One way to help improve relationships -- we still are responsible for our families -- try to accommodate those needs. I always try to take a look at individual needs and try to meet those first.

> …you have to be careful not to commit too early because it may appear to be a simple solution --- [the person is saying] I need an answer right away --- the fact --- if you look at the other side --- maybe your conclusion would be different. That's a factor too. Because sometimes when you make decisions --- you need to make them right away --- at the same time, making a hasty decision breeds a lack of trust because you don't stand by your word or you change your mind.

> There was a problem a couple of weeks ago when we sat down. -- I walked in the room, all of a sudden it was quiet. I guess they expected -- I said, "hey, these are the results, what does this tell us? What do we need to do?" So, to pose the question, as opposed to, some feeling they were going to get a pat on the back and others feeling like they would get chewed out…

	Superintendents Developing Trust	Superintendents Exhibiting Trust
Willingness to Risk Vulnerabilty 5 total items	- Do fun or slightly silly things to get self off any pedestal that may exist in others' minds - Create opportunities to meet/socialize/celebrate as a staff to encourage group cohesion as well as comfort level with supt -Leave decisions in others' hands whenever possible, seek ways to create decision making arenas	-Assume everyone wants to do a good job - Believe/behave as if others will act in an above board manner - Leave decisions in others' hands whenever possible, seek ways to create decision making arenas
Confidence 4 total items	-Build in time for trust development, organizationally and interpersonally - Pay close attention to personnel development - Focus on personnel development - Focus on perceptions	
Benevolence 3 total items	- Pay attention to small, human touches -keep your door open, don't require administrators to schedule an appt, -Meet staff member personal and family needs - Consistently confirm efforts from the past (organizational and individual)	-Meet staff member personal and family needs
Reliability 4 total items	-Support for organizational efforts must increase over time - Provide concrete support rather than just emotional support when seeking organizational change - Do what you say - Do not commit to anything too early	
Competence 6 total items	-Seek a balance between controls and openness - Push for organizational focus - seek the larger picture - Look for how pieces fit -Seek a personal balance between time given to org and time reserved for self -Sharing of ideas at work is done for a reason -Distance board from involvement in management	- Distance board from involvement in management
Openness 8 total items	- Develop understanding of reasons for changes -Be visible in schools -Be visible in community orgs, -Seek ways to remove distance between supt and individuals - Show up in schools - Focus on one-on-one contact - Be as open and direct as possible, with all levels and constituencies	-Let people know you as a person - Be as open and direct as possible, with all levels and constituencies
Honesty 4 total items	-Answer what is asked as directly as possible -Confront rumors/possible rumor spreaders directly but nonaggressively -Recognize disconnects between personal values, behaviors and community culture -"Observe my behavior; listen to what I say"	-Answer what is asked as directly as possible
Other 1 total item	-Pay attention to which community orgs represent what aspects of community	

Table I. Facets of trust and participant tacit knowledge.

Tacit Knowledge Domains

Table II shows the distribution of the items across the overarching tacit knowledge domains in the tacit knowledge literature. In addition to showing points of congruence among the interpersonal, intrapersonal, and organizational domains and the items surfacing in the interviews, Table II also provides information concerning the frequency of tacit knowledge domains evidenced in these particular interviews by these superintendents.

Certain items are placed in more than one domain. Thus, the total percentage of items across categories adds up to more than 100%. As was stated earlier, the complexities of trust and the implicitness of tacit knowledge lend themselves to probable overlap among the categories. Aspects of an item may place it in a particular category, but slight changes in context could result in dual or different placement. Items were assigned to categories based on the context and discussion in the interview segment from which the item was drawn.

Interpersonal tacit knowledge includes influencing, controlling, and managing others; establishing trust; supporting, understanding, and cooperating with others; communicating with others; learning from others; and handling social relationships. In this study, interpersonal tacit knowledge is the most emphatically represented domain, with 77% of the items incorporating interpersonal aspects. This is not surprising when considering that trust development is a dynamic process, acting and reacting within personal relationships. These findings support the work of Nestor-Baker and Hoy (2001), who found that superintendents' tacit knowledge focuses extensively on the interpersonal aspects of educational management.

The superintendents show similar levels of interpersonal tacit knowledge. Because tacit knowledge is practically-oriented and goal-driven, its predominance in this study suggests that interpersonal issues are particularly important focal points for the superintendents as they go

about the business of building trust in low trust situations. However, even though the superintendents evince similar levels of interpersonal knowledge, it is interesting to note the differences in application among the items. Both are deeply interpersonal in their efforts at trust development. However, there is considerable overlap in Superintendent A's categories; his strong representation of interpersonal tacit knowledge overlaps heavily with organizational tacit knowledge. His interview statements suggest that - even though he works extensively in the interpersonal domain - he tends to have a predominantly organizational view of trust building.

The dispersal of Superintendent B's tacit knowledge items, on the other hand, suggests that he tends to have a strongly interpersonal view of trust building. Neither view should be perceived as either better or worse. Rather, they suggest differences in the types of tacit knowledge the superintendents will utilize. Because the development and acquisition of tacit knowledge is influenced by the importance of particular goals to the individual, it can be surmised that these two superintendents - while having a broadly similar goal of improving trust within their school districts - may very well go about achieving that goal through pursuit of differently oriented sub-goals which will have, respectively, either an organizational or an interpersonal predominance.

The self-knowledge and self-regulation of intrapersonal tacit knowledge found in other examinations of tacit knowledge are also found here. However, intrapersonal aspects appear in far smaller percentages than those categorized as interpersonal, with slightly more than 11% of the items involving intrapersonal aspects. Superintendent B evidenced a slightly higher use of intrapersonal knowledge in his trust development efforts (12.5% to Superintendent A's 10.5%) [I am not sure this is a significant enough difference to make anything of]. Given the complex interplay of interpersonal and intrapersonal knowledge in Gardner's work (1993) and in the work

of Nestor-Baker and Hoy (2001), and given Superintendent B's predeliction for utilization of interpersonal tacit knowledge, it is not surprising that he evinces a higher level. If there are surprises, it is that intrapersonal tacit knowledge was not culled more often in both superintendents' interviews.

	Interpersonal 27 items Supt A 12 items Supt B 15 items	**Intrapersonal** 4 items Supt A 2 items Supt B 2 items	**Organizational** 17 items Supt A 14 items Supt B 3 items
Superintendent A			
Build in time for trust development, organizationally and interpersonally	X		X
Pay attention to small, human touches - keep your door open; don't require administrators to schedule an appt	X		
Be visible in schools - show up at schools, meetings, activities	X		
Meet staff member personal and family needs whenever possible	X		X
Be visible in community orgs.	X		
Pay attention to which community orgs represent what aspects of the community			X
Provide concrete support rather than just emotional support when seeking organizational change			X
Support for organizational efforts must increase over time			X
Consistently reaffirm efforts from the past (organizational and individual staff member)	X		X
Believe behave as if everyone wants to do a good job	X	X	
Share ideas at work for a reason, in pursuit of a goal, not just to feel good			X
Actively seek a balance between controls and openness			X
Actively seek a personal balance between time given to org and time reserved for self growth		X	
Do what you say you will do; if must break your word, explain why, in concrete terms	X		X
Develop understanding of reasons for changes; do not attempt to sell solutions, allow ownership to develop	X		X
Do not commit to anything too early	X		X
Push for organizational focus - larger picture			X
Look for how pieces fit	X		X
Pay close attention to personnel development	X		X
Superintendent B			
Let people know you as a person	X		
Actively seek ways to remove distance between supt and individuals	X		
Show up in schools, at activities	X		
Do fun or slightly silly things to get self off any pedestal that	X		

may exist in others' minds			
Answer what is asked as directly as possible	X		
Focus on one-on-one contact	X		
Confront rumors/possible rumor spreaders directly, but nonagressively	X		
Focus on personnel development	X		X
Create opportunities to meet/socialize/celebrate as a staff to encourage group cohesion as well as comfort level with supt	X		X
Distance board from involvement in management - work through board chair, have members call secretary for appointments			X
Be as open and direct as possible, with all levels and constituencies	X		
Believe that others will act in above board manner as well	X	X	
Rrecognize disconnects between personal values, behaviors and community	X	X	
Leave decisions in others' hands whenever possible, seek ways to create decision making arenas	X		
"Observe my behavior, listen to what I say"	X		
Focus on perceptions, acknowledging them, using them	X		

Table II. Dispersal of tacit knowledge items across tacit knowledge domains.

Conclusion

The interviews described herein provide an initial picture of the superintendents' efforts to develop trust. To assist in developing the picture, additional interviews have been conducted with these superintendents. The later interviews continue to pursue the relationship of tacit knowledge and trust development, and provide a rounding out of the superintendents' experiences during that important first year in new positions.

Coming from somewhat similar professional backgrounds and holding similar general expectations for building trust, the men appeared to have more similarities than differences in their approaches to trust development at the start of the superintendents' first year in new superintendencies. However, as the year progressed, divergencies in the superintendents' paths became more apparent. By the end of the first year, significant changes had occurred. Changing relationships with staff, board members, and the community weave through the later interviews, providing additional fodder for consideration of the tacit knowledge the two men bring to bear

on their particular situations. Tacit knowledge evidence from the later interviews will be explored in a future paper.

Why does this matter? Trust has been called the "foundation of school effectiveness" (Cunningham & Gresso, 1993) and yet studies of trust in schools are relatively scarce. Studies of superintendent trust development are considerably scarcer. And studies considering the generation and application of tacit knowledge in trust development within the superintendency have been nonexistent prior to this study. Using a tacit knowledge lens to examine the ways superintendents handle trust relationships can provide increased ability to shed light on learned behaviors, allowing a goal-oriented consideration of why and how trust develops or disintegrates.

If trust allows individuals to focus on the task at hand, and therefore, to work and learn more effectively (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 1998); and if distrust causes people to feel uncomfortable and ill at ease and provokes them to expend energy on assessing the actions and potential actions of others (Fuller, 1996), then research devoted to trust in the superintendency is a viable avenue for scholarly pursuit. Does trust in the superintendent and the superintendency link to school district and school community effectiveness in the way faculty trust has been linked to school effectiveness and positive school climate (Hoy et al., 1992; Tarter et al., 1995)? A tacit knowledge framework can assist in answering such questions, providing clearer understanding of the beliefs behind the behaviors, and opening additional pathways for consideration of effective trust development strategies in the superintendency. Though he was not speaking of research into trust development and tacit knowledge, one of the superintendents uttered fitting final words.

> I'm always trying to develop as much history as I can --- I worried about the community --- some of the lack of support for the school district --- why did that happen? What can we learn from that? History can teach us a lot. We need to be good historians so we don't create the same problems --- why those things came about or what decision could

be made that might trigger that same distrust. And within the organization…just being responsible and at the same time working within individuals --- To me, as long as we get to the end, reach our goal, however we get there --- working in a team situation, we will come up with a better solution.

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